



PUBLICITY DEPARTMENT

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RELEASE AS DESIRED

John J. Brunetti, owner of Hialeah Park today announced the formation of a group dedicated to saving the world famous track. The group of several hundred persons under the banner of the Concerned Citizens to Save Hialeah gathered at the track Thursday, March 1, 1990. The Concerned Citizens Committee represented political, civic, historical boards, business and horsemen's groups and heard various leaders led by Hialeah Mayor Raul L. Martinez urge a continuation of the grand racing tradition known as Hialeah Park.

Mayor Raul L. Martinez and John J. Brunetti outlined the problems facing Hialeah and indeed all of South Florida Racing as a result of deregulation. Also discussed was monopoly, foreign ownership and the disastrous economic effect from the possible loss of Hialeah Park.

Horsemen from around the nation expressed concern that the loss of Hialeah would mean a decline in Florida's important breeding industry, and the loss of a huge winter stabling area for some 1,500 horses. Hialeah's fine tradition, historic significance and economic impact on the World Wide Racing Industry were also discussed at length.

Mayor Martinez pointed out a number of pertinent facts concerning Hialeah's impact on the local and State economy. The Mayor stated, "It is conservatively estimated that over 1,000 people employed by the track contribute upwards of Fourteen Million Dollars to the local and State economies each year."

A number of horsemen reminisced about Hialeah's past glories, its National Historic Prominence along with such other tracks as Saratoga and Churchill Downs, and the number of champion race horses who began their rise to glory in classics as the Flamingo Stakes and Widener Handicap. Seattle Slew, considered by many to be the racing champion

of the 1980's began his march to Horse of the Year honors at Hialeah and took his place alongside such immortal race horses as Kelso, Bold Ruler, Citation, Nashua, Needles and War Admiral.

John J. Brunetti pointed out that Hialeah's loss would result in a foreign dominated monopoly controlling racing in South Florida. "Such a situation would stifle the Florida Racing & Breeding Industries for years to come," said Brunetti. "A monopoly would have a long and lasting impact on Florida Pari-Mutuel Legislation, the future of Off-Track Betting, racing fans and horsemen whose interest would not be governed by choice."

Brunetti went on to state that Hialeah needed a minimum of sixty-five (65) winter racing dates per year. Although there are three South Florida tracks, these dates represent less than one-fourth of the racing year. Statistics prove a maximization of handle, state tax, purses, Breeders Awards and track income when Hialeah has run the middle dates.

Brunetti concluded his remarks with a brief overview of the current situation and suggested a new Hialeah with a Board of Directors comprising representatives from the Florida Thoroughbred Breeders Association, the Florida Horsemens Benevolent and Protective Association, the Visitors and Convention Bureau, the Beacon Council, the Dade and Hialeah Chambers of Commerce along with the Mayor of Hialeah. This would ensure involvement and participation by all of those who are most affected by the future of Hialeah Park.

"I am willing to contribute whatever the value of Hialeah Park is to this venture," Brunetti added. "It is now up to the people in this room and others such as Governor Bob Martinez, members of the Legislature, Horsemen, Breeders and leaders of the business community to come together to save this great institution."

For information:

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3/1/90